



National Institutes of Health

**The National Institute  
of Environmental Health Sciences**

**An Ad Hoc Panel Convened to Assist the  
NIEHS with Developing a Preliminary  
Research Strategy Relating to Health and  
Environmental Aspects of Exposure to Dioxin and  
Related Compounds in Vietnam**

***OPEN TO THE PUBLIC***

**August 18, 2000  
9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.**

**Hyatt Regency Monterey Resort and Conference Center  
Monterey, California**

*Sponsored and Organized by the*  
**National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences  
Research Triangle Park, North Carolina**

## **BACKGROUND**

Agent Orange was used as a defoliant during the Vietnam War and included, as contaminants, dioxin and related compounds. In the Fiscal Year 2000 Appropriations Conference Report, the Congress requested the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), National Institutes of Health, to conduct research on the health and environmental aspects of agent orange and dioxin in Southeast Asia, especially Vietnam. The NIEHS is in the initial phase of developing a research strategy in preparation for a meeting with Vietnamese researchers late in the year.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the NIEHS public meeting is to obtain advice from invited panel members and interested stakeholders on the development of an initial research agenda to serve as a basis for discussion with Vietnamese researchers. This agenda will consider possible studies relating to health and environmental aspects of exposure to dioxin and related compounds in Vietnam. The NIEHS goal is to develop a joint research strategy with the Vietnamese. Following this meeting, NIEHS will meet with their counterparts in Vietnam to develop a joint research strategy. The input from this meeting will be used to guide the NIEHS in these discussions.

## **RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS, ISSUES, AND CONCERNS**

Panelists and the public are asked to recommend research directions that could be pursued to fill data gaps that relate to health and environmental aspects of exposure to dioxin and related compounds. It will be important to identify scientific issues and concerns that would be associated with such studies. Issues to be addressed include, but are not limited to the following:

### **Agent Orange**

- What is it?
  - What contaminants are of concern?
  - Were other herbicides used in Vietnam that contain similar contaminants?
- Geographical Distribution, Fate and Transport
  - Where was Agent Orange used?
  - Are there other locations of interest?
  - Are there other sources of the contaminants of Agent Orange? What are they and how can they be identified?
  - Are the contaminants in Agent Orange likely to still be around? Will they have migrated and to where? Over what time frame?
- Health Effects
  - What has been the extent of human exposure and what is it now?
  - What are the known health effects of the contaminants of Agent Orange?
  - What effects are suspected?
  - What studies have been done which included Vietnamese scientists and/or cohorts?
  - What has been studied in US Veterans? What has been found?
  - How do US Veteran exposures differ from Vietnamese exposures?
- Research Strategies
  - What strategy appears best for population-based studies of dioxin and related compounds?
  - How should exposure be assessed?
  - What are the largest data gaps in understanding the human health effects of dioxin and related compounds?
  - Is environmental sampling advised? If yes, how should it be approached?
- Infrastructure
  - What skills will be needed for research on dioxin and like compounds in Vietnam?
  - What technologies will be needed?
  - What information sources need to be in place?

## **TENTATIVE AGENDA**

9:30 am	Welcome and Charge to the Panel	Drs. Christopher J. Portier and Sheila Newton, NIEHS
	Agent Orange	Speaker (TBA)
	Geographical Distribution, Fate and Transport	Speaker (TBA)
	Health Effects	Speaker (TBA)
	Discussion	
12:00 pm	Lunch	
1:00 pm	Research Strategies and Infrastructure	Panel
3:00 pm	Break	
3:15 pm	Public Comments	
5:00 pm	Adjourn	

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The public comment sessions will be open discussions of the issues and views presented during the day and/or additional recommendations and perspectives. Those interested in presenting their views and comments at the meeting are invited to present oral comments. The time allotted to each speaker will be dependent upon the total number of speakers, but it is anticipated that a minimum of 7 to 10 minutes will be available to each. Persons registering to give oral comments are asked to provide a copy of their statement to supplement the record of the meeting. If possible, please forward statements to the NTP Office of Liaison and Scientific Review (see contact information below) prior to the meeting or, if possible, bring 20 copies to the meeting. The meeting will end at 5:00 pm or earlier if the discussions conclude. For planning purposes, persons wishing to give oral comments are asked to contact the National Toxicology Program (NTP) Office of Liaison and Scientific Review by 5:00 pm (EDT) on August 17, if possible. Speakers may also register on-site from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm on August 17, and beginning at 9:00 am on August 18. Every effort will be made to accommodate all speakers. Attendance is limited only by space available.

Anyone unable to attend but would like to provide written comments may forward them to the contact office listed below. To be of use to the NIEHS in developing a research agenda, written comments must be received by September 18.

## **REGISTRATION AND MEETING LOCATION**

For planning purposes, all persons wishing to attend are asked to contact the NTP Office of Liaison and Scientific Review by 5:00 pm (EDT) on August 17, if at all possible (see contact information below). A registration table will also be available at the Hyatt Regency on August 17, from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm and also on August 18, at 9:00 am. Attendance is limited only by space available. When registering, all persons are asked to provide their name, affiliation, mailing address, phone, fax, e-mail, and sponsoring organization (if any).

The meeting will be held on Friday, August 18, 2000, from approximately 9:30 am to 5:00 pm (or end earlier if the discussions conclude) at the Hyatt Regency Monterey Resort and Conference Center, One Golf Course Drive, Monterey, CA. Hotel phone is 831-372-1234. The meeting will be recorded to establish a record of the comments.

The date and location of this meeting coincide with the 20<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Halogenated Environmental Organic Pollutants and POP's, an annual conference of dioxin researchers, to take advantage of the attendance at the meeting of dioxin experts and the public interested in issues related to dioxin and Agent Orange.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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